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ABSTRACT

An inventory of specialized competencies for the training of teachers of foreign languages (Latin, ancient Greek and modern languages) was carried out by the executive committees of the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association and the Pennsylvania Classical Association through federal Title IV funds to serve as minimum guidelines for teacher certification. The present document contains the competencies for modern languages. Five areas are considered. (1) Command of the Foreign Language: The teacher should demonstrate certain specific abilities in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. (2) Linguistics: The foreign language teacher should be trained in phonology, morphology, and syntax, and should be able to demonstrate certain kinds of knowledge in these areas. (3) Culture of the Language Area: The foreign language teacher should recognize that a language reflects its culture and should demonstrate an understanding and acceptance of the ways in which cultures differ. (4) Teaching-Learning Process: The foreign language teacher should demonstrate competency in managing the teaching-learning process on appropriate levels by helping the learner to develop abilities in the four language skills and by selecting and implementing appropriate instructional goals and classroom procedures. (5) Professional Development: The teacher should be well informed in regard to teaching methods, instructional materials, and resources available for foreign languages and should know the professional organizations and their principal publications. (CFM)

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INVENTORY OF SPECIALIZED COMPETENCIES FOR THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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In December of 1975 the Bureau of Curriculum Services of the Pennsylvania Department of Education announced that Federal Title IV funds were available to professional organizations interested in promoting competency-based teacher education. The idea appealed to the executive committees of the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association and the Pennsylvania Classical Association. Joining forces, the two organizations secured a grant to produce an inventory of specialized competencies for the certification of teachers of modern and classical languages.

The resulting competency study will have no immediate effect on teacher certification but serves as the first step in a process leading to eventual modification of teacher-training requirements in Pennsylvania. No time-table for changes in the present approach to certification of language teachers has been announced, but there are clear signs that the PDE is moving in the direction of competency-based teacher education. Fortunately, the foreign-language profession was consulted early and invited to contribute its ideas far in advance of any possible changes.

The inventory of specialized competencies appearing in part below was produced through the deliberations of thirty-two professional people, who met for a three-day workshop, October 13-15, 1976, at the Host Inn, Harrisburg. Participants were selected through recommendations from the executive committees of the PSMLA and the PCA. The participants included classroom teachers and administrators from basic education and teacher educators from higher education. These represented both professional and academic departments from a variety of institutions, private and public, across the Commonwealth. The names of the PSMLA participants will be found at the end of this report.

Dr. Raldo Parascenzo, immediate past president of the PSMLA, served as project coordinator for the modern languages. The contact person with the Bureau of Academic Programs was Dr. Philip T. Heesen, president of the PCA and project coordinator for the classical languages. The Pennsylvania Competency-Based Education consultant was Dr. Gary Clabaugh, associate professor of Education, LaSalle College, Philadelphia.

Among the resource materials employed by the PSMLA participants were these: "Guidelines for Teacher Education Programs in Modern Foreign Languages," *PMLA*, (May, 1966), reprinted in the *MLJ* (October, 1966); Minimal Competencies for Foreign Language Teachers," published by the New York State Association of FL Teachers, 1974; "Behavioral Competency Charts," prepared by the FL Department of West Chester State College and "Policies, Procedures, and Standards for Certification of Professional School Personnel, Pennsylvania Department of Education," *Foreign Language* (1970).

Competencies for Modern Languages

Introductory Statement:

It was agreed by the PSMLA and the PCA that the inventory should provide for the distinct attributes of the classical *vis a vis* the modern languages by listing in parallel columns the teaching competencies appropriate to each. The full report submitted in November to the Bureau of Academic Programs, PDE, contains the competencies for Latin and ancient Greek side by side with those for the modern languages. Anyone interested in seeing the competencies for classical languages may write to Ms. Mary Ann Yost, Secretary of the PCA, The Winchester-Thurston School, 555 Morewood Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213, for a free copy of the complete report or consult the spring 1977 issue of the PCA *Bulletin*, where the classical language competencies and a list of the PCA participants are published. The competencies for modern languages that appear below have been developed also for teachers of English to speakers of other languages. They are intended as minimal guidelines for teacher certification.

I. Command of the Foreign Language

A. Listening Comprehension

The foreign-language teacher will demonstrate the ability to

1. understand a native speaker in an informal situation discussing a nontechnical subject at a moderate rate of speed.
2. understand the narrative of commercial films on at least the secondary level.
3. understand the major topics presented in a newscast in the foreign language.
4. understand formal lectures in the foreign language in an academic situation within the experience of the individual.

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B. Speaking

The foreign-language teacher will demonstrate the ability to

1. speak the foreign language at a moderate rate of speed with an acceptable pronunciation and intonation.
2. deliver in the foreign language from prepared notes an oral report of at least 10 minutes on a selected topic.
3. give classroom directions in the foreign language.
4. initiate and sustain a conversation with a fluent speaker of the foreign language in an informal situation.

C. Reading

The foreign-language teacher will demonstrate the ability to

1. read with understanding material of average difficulty.
2. use the foreign language dictionary with competence.

D. Writing

The foreign-language teacher will demonstrate the ability to

1. write informal letters, take lecture notes, and write reports in the foreign language with acceptable standards of correctness.
2. construct with accuracy a variety of test items and test instructions in the foreign language.

II. Linguistics

The particular competencies in linguistic-science which the profession at large accepts as essential in the training of a modern foreign-language teacher are as follows:

A. Phonology

The foreign-language teacher will demonstrate

1. the ability to contrast the phonemic system of English with that of the target language.
2. a knowledge of the context-sensitive allophonic system of the target language.
3. the ability to apply competencies nos. 1 and 2 above in anticipating pronunciation difficulties of English-speaking students in the foreign language.

B. Morphology

The foreign-language teacher will demonstrate

1. a formal knowledge of the morphology of English and of the target language.
2. the ability to comprehend unfamiliar words through the recognition of their constituent morphemes.
3. a knowledge of formal and informal communication styles and the contexts appropriate to each.

C. Syntax

The foreign-language teacher will demonstrate

1. a familiarity with the technical nomenclature of grammatical analysis in both traditional and contemporary approaches.
2. the ability to explain the rationale of generative-transformational grammar.
3. the ability to write phrase-structure rules and transformational rules of the most important syntactical components of English and of the target language.

III. Culture of the Language Area

The foreign-language teacher will recognize that a language reflects its culture and will demonstrate an understanding and acceptance of the ways in which cultures differ. The foreign language teacher will demonstrate a knowledge of

A. how geography, history, and the social and political institutions of a country reflect its culture.

B. such non-linguistic particulars of the foreign culture as gesture, body language, proxemics, dress, time concepts, dietary preferences, and other expressions of tradition.

C. the achievements of the foreign culture in literature, art, music, architecture, science, technology, and folklore.

D. how a language reflects its culture through its pecularities of vocabulary, syntax, and idiom.

IV. Teaching-Learning Process

The foreign-language teacher will demonstrate competency in managing the teaching-learning process on appropriate levels by

A. helping the learner to develop abilities in the four language skills and an awareness of the target culture through such activties as the following:

1. Listening skill:
   a. Design and implement listening discrimination and listening comprehension exercises.
   b. Provide a range of authentic listening experiences.
2. Speaking skill:
   a. Plan activities that develop the learner's skill in pronounciation, intonation, and fluency.

b. Plan activities in which the learner manipulates and internalizes the oral structures of the language.
c. Plan activities by which the learner improves and expands oral communication skills.

3. Reading skill:
   a. Provide practice for the learner in decoding skills and contextual guessing strategies.
   b. Provide a range of authentic reading materials.
4. Writing skill:
   a. Plan controlled writing activities that develop the learner's skill in orthography and manipulation of the structure of the language.
   b. Plan a range from guided to liberated writing activities through which the learner develops and expands communicative competence.
5. Cultural awareness:
   a. Plan activities that enable the learner to recognize general living patterns in the target culture.
   b. Plan activities that enable the learner to recognize the contribution of the target culture in art, music, history, etc. (Refer to culture section of classics competencies for broader listing.)
   c. Plan activities that enable the learner to recognize the influences of foreign cultures on our own.

B. selecting and implementing instructional goals and classroom procedures, such as the following:
1. Utilize specific objectives for daily and long-range goals.
2. Utilize a variety of techniques for motivational, instructional, and communicative purposes.
3. Recognize and provide for differences in ability, learning style, and interests.
4. Design informal and formal tests to diagnose and evaluate the learner's progress.
5. Foster a positive climate in the foreign-language classroom.

V. Professional Development

The foreign-language teacher will be able to

A. state logical reasons for the place of the study of foreign languages in the basic curriculum.

B. list the advantages and disadvantages of several approaches to foreign-language teaching.

C. examine critically the use of any foreign-language teaching strategy selected in terms of the characteristics and needs of students.

D. evaluate, select, and use materials appropriate to those learning objectives and strategies previously developed that pertain to foreign-language teaching.

E. demonstrate knowledge of the steps necessary to construct a foreign-language curriculum.

F. answer questions and locate information about
1. various regulations pertaining to foreign-language teacher-preparation, program approval, certification, and curriculum development.
2. resources available for foreign languages from state education agencies, professional organizations, institutions of higher education, and the federal government.

G. name the major local, state, and national professional and foreign-language organizations and their principal publications and indicate the purpose and importance of each to the foreign-language teaching profession.

H. draw conclusions from current research in foreign-language education that relates to his or her own teaching.

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